



PETER YEADON

## PLACE CREATION AND ARCHITECTURAL HYPOCRISY

STAGE MANAGER: —with two LLs. Fielding Lloyd Mellish has the distinction of being TUNA's longest continuing thesis extension student, having worked steadily at his thesis since 1983. It's been a long hard road, but in just a few moments he'll be bringing the results of his months and months of work to the public eye at last. In the meantime, why don't we see if we can hear the final seconds of the preceding crit, just winding down in the next room.

(Sounds of revving chain saw, loud voices, a scream—and a dismembered body is flung out on stage).

Hmm, I hope Fielding Lloyd Mellish copes with deconstruction more successfully than Clyde, here. (CHORUS member retrieves body and carries it away).

(CHORUS hums "Friendly Giant" theme)

STAGE MANAGER (as CHORUS member sets up child's highchair): Here's a chair for TUNA's own professor Tony Moldy, official figurehead of the MONA at TUNA's program. Of course, we all know who wields the real power around this school, but the Chairman's secretary doesn't usually show up at crits. Tony has been acting as Fielding's—

F.L.L.M. (offstage): Fielding Lloyd Mellish!

STAGE MANAGER: Tony has been Fielding Lloyd Mellish's—

F.L.L.M. (offstage): With two LLs!

STAGE MANAGER: Tony's been his thesis advisor, and in that capacity at the crit he acts as official timekeeper, synthesizer, masseuse, surrogate daddy, and—heck, what can I say—all around nice guy. Tony's a loving father to twelve tidy youngsters,

Place creation does not exist easily within architecture. The many minds, hands and timeframes which have contributed to the representation of one place as distinct from another have established complexities which are too widespread for architecture to articulate alone. Although architecture continually explores an elastic potential for place installation, it rarely questions its own position as spokesperson.

There is a fine margin between the universal and the peculiar - between archetypes and folklore. This is the margin of the architect concerned with place, a margin demanding of an understanding of both continuity and aberration. Still, s(he) operates within both, and remains at an arms length from a concentrated ontological insight. This insight, coupled with the complexities of a genealogy of place, creates matrices of place whose variables and parameters of characterization stretch far beyond the potential of architecture as it is directed presently by the architectural profession and schools of architecture.

Consider place understanding and university education. Contradictory terms are they not? Architects have become articulate through conditioning. So have many representatives of the positions which characterize *society* as a whole. University education, once dedicated to the consolidation of universal knowledge, has been divided into concerns; specializations of which architecture is only one of many. Important, accessible knowledge is continually being compromised by a system which favours concentrated effort over widespread understanding. Terminology sustains the disassociation between architecture and the constituents it represents. It seems that the very

foundation of education, that of communication and an exchange of knowledge, have been violated. The separation continues.

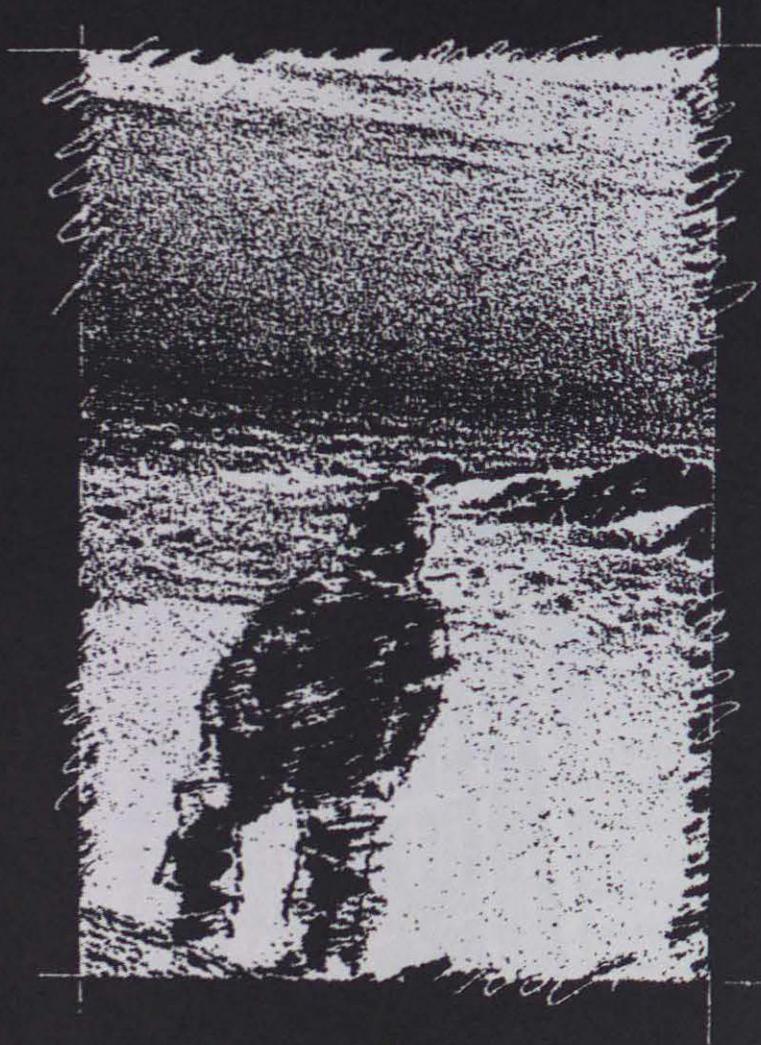
Too many architects are concerned with the words constituting an urban context, rather than the dialogue itself. They borrow symbols and artifacts of built culture instead of engaging the story line which has created places of mind and substance. The result is a plastic or cosmetic representation of a tightly woven subject. The persistence of certain architectural elements is deemed to be the built culture. These elements are replicated or abstracted so as to give something back to the growth of the city. Their existence is taken for granted; their presence is the understood. These character traits are pulled out of context and manipulated until the value of their meaning becomes inaccessible.

Architects must remind themselves that they are responsible for forming our places..., but they are not alone. If architecture is concerned with place creation, then it must try to address the multifaceted complexities which have, and will continue, to create place beyond space. Place conscious architecture needs to establish a dialogue with its particular place situation, establish a dialogue with the universals of a place - conscious architecture: boundary real; boundary imagined; collection; physical comfort; seclusion; field of defence; wall of defence; reality of suggested opportunities; layered regions; position of awareness; permanence; reuse; consolidation; predictability; symbol and cultural artefact; accessibility; time; services; comprehensible urbanity; extension of the immediate to the whole' This dialogue is vital to making these universals operable and valuable, their value being relative to the identification of architectural gesture as constituent.



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## F I E L D

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